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"STRAINS" IN SOVIET LEADERSHIP

- I. Because US studies smallest scraps evidence touching on stability Soviet regime, even minor "straws in wind" attract our attention. Recently, such "straws"--appearing with increasing frequency--suggest all is not sweetness and light in Soviet "collective leadership."
 - A. Publicity treatment Party First Secretary Khrushchev strikingly preferential in past months.
 - B. He, rather than Premier Malenkov, has been official spokesman on such hot problems as.
 - Soviet agricultural expansion,
 program and manpower allocated to
 program
 - 2. Lagging construction program,
 - 3. Anti-religious activities

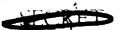
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- 1, Led delegation to resping.
- 2. Has talked freely to diplomats and visitors, to evident disgractions.
 of Foreign Minister Molotov.
- D. Has been built up by means taked bistory.
 - 1. Example listed among Lenin's
 "closest associates" during civil
 war (untrue).
 - Set new date for annual Lenin celebration (in eyes of people, ties him both to new holiday and to "revered leader").
- F. Boasts of closeness to Stalin--"I proposed (Bachelor Tax Law) to Comrade

 Stalin That law was drafted and con-
- II. In contrast, Premier Malenkov has made no major policy pronouncement since 753 54

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Kirushonada



- A. Malenkov's only solo publicity during
 '54 (New Year answers to US news
 agency's questions) played down in
 propaganda, compared to year before.
- III. Despite this contrast, Moscow observers unanimously agree Malenkov top dog when leaders seen together.
 - A. Attlee delegation--Malenkov "first among equals."
 - B. Ambassador Bohlen--"two most important men...are Malenkov and Khrushchev, in that order."
- We believe that preservation "collective leadership" probably still priority interest of top leaders as matter self-
 - **Straws in wind" show difference between present regime and Stalin's, when "empire building" by subordinates was fatal.



- in contrast, "collegial" regime seems willing premit such maneuvering in hopes situation will correct itself.
- C. Apparently greater leeway for individual action could prove source of strength for regime due resultant improved Soviet decision-making.
- D. In any case, dangerous for us to hope for serious dislocations of regime within leadership.